

McReynolds and T.J., Michaela and Sean, under the south balcony. Would you please welcome them to the Legislature. Senator Labedz, would you like to have a word?

SENATOR LABEDZ: Yes, point of personal privilege.

PRESIDENT: State your point.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Michaela is sitting here in my seat, it's her birthday.

PRESIDENT: Well, let's wish her a...

SENATOR LABEDZ: I'd like you all to wish her a happy birthday.

PRESIDENT: Sure. How old are you?

SENATOR LABEDZ: She's ten years old.

PRESIDENT: Ten years old, that's great. Thank you, Senator Labedz. Mr. Clerk, LB 567.

CLERK: LB 567, Mr. President, was a bill introduced by Senators Withem, Wesely, Ashford and Bernard-Stevens. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 18 of last year. At that time, it was referred to the Education Committee. The bill was advanced to General File, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President, I will start off and if others have anything to say, they may. This is a bill that deals with early childhood education. Most people that study education and make recommendations on things we can do to do a better job of preparing our young people to become adults agree that the better education process, the best way to impact upon young people is at an early, early age. More and more school administrators and school boards around the state, as a matter of fact, that run kindergarten through third grade programs are beginning to focus more of their resources in those areas because those are the areas where if a child develops a learning problem, an inability to read, an inability to compute, a poor self-concept in compared with being able to achieve in school, all those problems, those problems are going to live with them forever. Most experts believe that the whole concept of early